

Emperial Carriage Parade at Bad Ischl (Austria)

On Friday, August 16th in Bad Ischl, Austria, there was a parade of unusual character for this area. Martin Achleitner, Felix Rothauer and their team organized a cavalcade of traditional turnouts through the town centre. They made short stops in the Imperial Villa park, in a prominent area of the main promenade, and in the park belonging to the town's spa. Here the turnouts were presented and their particular characteristics explained to the public by popular experts.



A typical Hungarian Hunting Carriage and Austrian Dress...

The horses were put to at the local racecourse where there was enough space for the lorries and trailers belonging to the drivers. A total of 53 turnouts had entered for the event, and 32 had chosen to take part in the presentation, where they were judged by Peter Höpler (A) and Hartmuth Huber (D). Both these judges are members of the AIAT (Association Internationale d'Attelage de Tradition), which supports organizers with their experience. In this way, drivers were given the chance to experience such a competition and were given advice as to how to improve their turnouts. Many a driver was glad of the useful hints they received concerning their turnout's potential.



An authentic reminiscence of the days of Emperor Franz-Josef ...

After the presentation the drivers started immediately for the parade. The judges were impressed by many of the turnouts. One such was a typical equipage fulfilling the maxim of the whole event. It was a team of Gidrans - an elegant and lively Hungarian breed - in typical Hungarian harness with intricately woven Salangs, put to a Hungarian hunting carriage: a living demonstration of horse traffic in imperial times. The driver, with his large whiskers and Austrian dress, completed the traditional character of the turnout. What is more, the team was very well driven and the horses well mannered.



A very sportsmanlike turnout...

There were other turnouts that caught the judges' attention too; one was the well-bred and well-trained Kladruby Horse put to a dogcart by Belvalette, Paris, or the pair of Friesians in Semi-State harness put to a large and well-restored Landau. Above all, there were a number of turnouts pulled by Noric horses, the breed of heavy horses typical for the area around Bad Ischl.



A pair of rural beauties...

The whole event was a great success for Bad Ischl, its reputation as a horse town and the celebration of its history having played an important part of the Imperial History of Austria. Such success is motivation for the organizers and the drivers to meet again at other events that follow, to learn more about traditional driving, to improve their turnouts and to have fun with friends, all of whom enjoy driving and horses.

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